

## **Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes – FINAL**

June 19, 2015, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

MSU Detroit Center, 3408 Woodward Ave.

Detroit, MI 48201

#### **Attendance**

**Present:** Asim Alavi, Nasim Ansari, Jamie Hsu, Soraya Kim, Jin-Kyu Koh, Anand Kumar, Grace Lee, Guozhen Lu, Mahima Mahadevan, Toshiki Masaki, Ryan Rosario, Joe Tasma, Jeffrey Vang and Tsu-Yin Wu

**Ex-officio and Guest:** Bing Goei, MONA, State Representative Stephanie Chang, and Steve Tobocman, Global Detroit

**Staff:** Mary McLellan, MAPAAC Commission Liaison-MDCR and Denise Yee Grim, MAPAAC Community Liaison

**Unable to attend:** Scott T. Ayotte, Connie Dang, Willie Dechavez, Hannah Feikema, Roland Hwang, and David Long

#### **I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Jamie Hsu called the regular meeting of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission to order at 9:01 a.m. on June 19, 2015.

Jamie shared his appreciation and thanked the commissioners for engaging in the SIG initiatives and working hard as a team. The APA communities and the state of Michigan are anticipation MAPAAC contributions from the SIG's work.

Jamie welcomed Jin-Kyu Koh, our new commissioner to the commission and Jin-Kyu shared a little information about himself. Jamie mentioned Scott Ayotte, another new commissioner, who was unable to attend the meeting and will introduce him at the next commission meeting.

#### **II. Approval of March 13, 2015 Meeting Minutes**

Asim Alavi asked if there were any additional comments or changes to the draft minutes. Nasim Ansari motioned to approve the meeting minutes and Soraya Kim seconded. Motion passed.

#### **IV. SIG's Plan Initiative Reports:**

Jamie recapped the intent of the SIGs. There are four groups: SIG 1 is the interface with the government (state departments and agencies and legislators). SIG 2 is to interact with the community, capture the voices, understand what's on their minds and their issues. SIG 3 is to make sure that the APAs have equal and fair participation, no discrimination in any events and SIG 4 is to promote and recognize the contributions of APAs. Although everyone belongs to a Group and each group has many initiatives, Jamie encouraged the commissioners to join in on any initiatives and share their talents and thoughts and not be limited to their SIG. The SIGs are operating for at least five months, we are still learning to do this effectively, so take this opportunity to listen to the reports and to think about lessons learned collectively and how we can move forward and for next year to work effectively.

**SIG 1 Report:** Toshiki shared the group is in the information gathering mode. They participated in the APIAVote-MI conference in March where the focus is how to approach legislators and share issues. On June 1, Mahima and Toshiki participated in the Ann Arbor town hall meeting and invited Mr. Shotaro Uedu, Executive Director of Japan Business Society of Detroit (JBSD). After the town hall meeting, Toshiki and Mr. Uedu agreed to distribute a MAPAAC short survey at one of their JBSD

events to gather the Japanese's issues and concerns. In July, they are planning to participate in the Asian American Engagement Coalition Strategy Session hosted by APIAVote-MI where MAPAAC will sponsor for \$2,500.00 and participate in the strategy of the coalition next steps and timeline. Mahima added that they are indentifying the priorities of the APA communities to share with the Governor's office and the state depts. and legislators. The three sources are:

1. APA town hall meetings
2. MAPAAC Survey Results
3. Asian American Engagement Coalition (AAEC) comprised of 5 groups, which are ACJ, APIAVote-MI, HAAP, MAI Family Services and NaFFAA.
  - The July meeting is to strategy session to identify the priorities of AAEC. They are not to replicate their efforts and the goal is to discuss their most pressing and important things in their community, using their resources and members. We thought that it is an opportunity to identify issues that MAPAAC, APA Legislative Caucus and the community members to lead on.

Jamie's Comments:

1. SIG 2 is currently capturing the APA voices by the town hall meeting and survey. We should summarize the issues and what we have heard. Take the summary and go through SIG 1 to present to the caucus, state depts., so they have the summary of the major issues we heard. Jamie suggested to SIG 1 to find the mechanism (newsletter, letters, or meetings) to share the information.
2. Clarification of sponsorship. MAPAAC can sponsor a workshop and/or meetings involving other APA organizations and community to do something. Mahima clarified that the AAEC is a session of five APA organizations.

Bing Goei's comments:

What we should work with the state department. There is an interagency council that the department heads meet, which we can get on the agenda and share the findings you have made. He agreed with the process of sharing the information. Mary can assist in making the connection to have the appropriate department agency directors to be at that meeting.

Rep. Stephanie Chang's comments:

She shared that legislators work with state agencies about different things going on in the communities. The caucus members can assist in a specific issues in a specific area that you think that a legislator can partner with MAPAAC to setup a meeting with the department. There may be an opportunity for the Caucus and MAPAAC together can present to the state agencies.

She shared that the Caucus to meet in July in SE Michigan to get updates on the town hall meetings and put together a policy agenda with the AAEC recommendations. There is a new caucus member, Kathy Crawford – Novi. It's a bi-partisan caucus and we able to circulate different events that are going on and to make sure that the representatives from that area is aware of the events.

Jamie suggested Rep. Chang to organize a get-together with all the commissioners, APA organization leaders and caucus annually.

Rep. Chang commented on Fred T. Korematsu Day bill and the activities of the House Education Committee. The committee is hoping to create an education task group and work with the AAEC and any MAPAAC members can share their thoughts on education. MDE has a group in revising the social studies standards and taking a look at the content of the curriculum make sure there are racial content in relations to civil rights. She has encouraged Theresa Tran of APIAVote-MI and invite MAPAAC members to join in the conversation.

Jamie commented that MAPAAC needs to be aware of all the initiatives, bills and discussions in the legislature and to be the bridge to inform the APA communities.

**SIG 2 Report:** Ryan share that we had three town hall meetings with the last few months. Anand lead the South Asian group and had a good representation of the community. Please see appendix A for the report. Tsu-Yin shared a summary of the three APA town hall meetings table (appendix B). Ryan spoke on the Sterling Heights town hall meeting. Ryan shared the sterling heights that the attendees don't know how to get to the resources. They are doing things on their own. They need help in the ways of funding, promoting their culture; for new immigrants they need to learn how to act (body language) that is different from their culture. To leverage the stereotyping, we may look into creating workshops for new immigrants. Issuing of bullying and her son was tainted for wearing a turban.

Jamie's comments:

1. MAI Family Services approach MAPAAC for sponsorship. We cannot sponsor their operations, but we can co-sponsor a special program.
2. Clear up any confusion of the purpose of town hall meetings. We are to capture the voices of the people and not intend to provide solutions on the spot. Putting the legislators or whoever there on the spot. In round two, we will talk about the solutions and put them on the spot. The hope is that we get four types of results from the meetings:
  1. Existing of MAPAAC – call the commissioners
  2. Summary the boarder issues and share this state agencies and caucus
  3. Special cases: we will handle them individually. Example: Bullying – give to SIG 3 and MDCR
  4. What we decide to do? Create initiatives i.e. cultural understanding. We may sponsor a workshop with a community organization with APA communities.

Ryan shared upcoming two town hall meetings on July 25<sup>th</sup> in Grand Rapids and Battle Creek. Jamie encourage the commissioners to attend the upcoming town hall meetings.

Bing's comment: MONA is working on a model to respond to issues that were addressed today and will work with SIG 1 on this model.

MONA is also working on creating a model of a one-stop shop for a person who is unfamiliar with the city and culture and customs to get answers to their questions under one roof. It's not strictly education, but also to assist in opening up a business. It will be culturally sensitive and cultural competent staff to approach and answer questions. Create a safe environment for immigrants.

MAPAAC Survey Update: Denise reported that we have over 200 survey and Mitchell Research is compiling and analyzing the information. Once it is complete, it will be sent to the executive committee and SIG 2 for review.

Jamie's comment: We have various surveys include the town halls meetings. He requested to place a temporary hold on additional survey and take a look at all the surveys we have done and what can we do with it. I like to move forward and see what we can do with the results. Take a summary of all the surveys so far and select ten issues something about it and what we are doing about it.

**SIG 3 Report:** Asim Alavi reported on the 2016 Korematsu presentations. One is schedule on January 28<sup>th</sup> at GVSU Allendale at 4 p.m. and Northville high school on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The student surveys on the campus issues and a handful have received. They had challenges growing up, but no specific issues stood out within the universities. They are looking at creating an online survey, but the challenge is getting responses. REI project is completed and the report will be sent to the sponsors.

Mary McLellan reported on the status of Fred T. Korematsu Day bill. The bill is in the Government committee. They have designated January 30 each year as Korematsu Day. They anticipate it will come out of committee and pass without any problems.

Jamie comment for SIG 3: From the survey we heard about bullying issues. The students are aware of bullying, but the parents do not know. The student may not tell their parents about it. Is there some organizations we can work with on education program of anti-bullying, which MAPAAC can sponsor for APAs.

Anand suggested that the peers of the college students would be ideal to talk about how to deal with bullying. Create a workshop and get them to talk. This is an example of an initiatives that SIG 3 can do.

**SIG 4 report:** Soraya Kim recapped the APA Heritage Day Celebration was well attended event with approximately 100 attendees. The joint event with APIAVote-MI added to more attendees this year. The cultural presentation from a dance group in Grand Rapids was professional. Wilie Dechavez was interviewed by Lansing Channel 10 before the APIAVote-MI Legislative Day presentation. Post publicity of the event by the Michigan Filipino Star. The date for 2016 celebration is May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Jamie's comment: To capture the attendance of the legislators for both presentation in the rotunda, it was recommend to adjust the schedule of the two activities in the rotunda and consider a breakfast or brunch for the attendees. Make both events shorter. Suggestion of moving the celebration earlier for students to attend in the morning. Denise will do the research.

Soraya continued and spoke about the Recognition Reception plan is to have an appreciation of all APA organizations. Invite all APA organizations and thank them for their services and a networking opportunity and for MAPACC to introduce ourselves. We are looking at VisTaTech Center at Schoolcraft College and we are working out the date. Recognizing three culture centers – Chinese, Korean and Filipino centers.

We will focus on service oriented and strategic partners organizations as our primary list. Invite state department directors and legislators to attend.

Jamie recommended that the commissioners are welcome invite other organizations as their guests. There will be not official invitation. Denise will draft an email invitation for them to use to invite their guests.

Denise commented that she will email the commissioners all the dates of our events.

## **VI. Budget Update**

Tsu-Yin Wu referred the spreadsheet of the budget update as of June 11, 2015 and explained the funds and expenses. She asked the SIGs to review their funds and determine how to spend their funds.

## **VII. Administrative Update**

Denise asked the commissioners to turn in their expense reimbursements along with the original receipts in a timely matter.

## **VIII. Next Commission Meeting:**

Saturday, September 12, 2015

Location: Heart of West Michigan United Way, 118 Commerce Ave., S.W. Grand Rapids

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Connie Dang will be leading the meeting

Topics for September Meeting:

- Nomination committee for executive committee candidates
- Reapply for being on the commission

Denise will email an invitation on behalf of Connie Dang for a social gathering.

Mary stated that the present commissioners who like to reapply, they must reapply online.

**IX. New Business:**

The date for the next commission meeting will remain on December 4<sup>th</sup>. We will do an annual summary to plan for 2016. Location: Anand recommend Dearborn – AAA building.

MDCR Report: Mary reported a new commission named Middle Eastern Affairs Commission. She is working with a commissioner in the Civil Rights Commission and she is trying to start an African American Affairs Commission to get it through legislation.

The budget has been signed and the commission need to set up the budget.

**X. Public Comments**

No public comments

**XI. Announcements**

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum at Saginaw Valley State University is featuring an exhibition of Ansel Adam's Wartime photographs of the Japanese American relocation camps until August 23.

Steve Tobocman, Executive Director of Global Detroit, presented an overview of Global Detroit and answers questions.

**XII. Adjournment:**

A motion from Guozhen Lu to adjourn the meeting, Nasim Ansari seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting concluded at 12:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Denise Yee Grim, July 9, 2015

Minutes submitted by:

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Asim Alavi, Secretary